

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application, of which claims 2-20 have been withdrawn from consideration and claim 1 has been amended. No new claims have been added.

Claims 1 and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,379,782 to Iguchi et al. (hereinafter "**Iguchi et al. '782**").

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

**Iguchi et al. '782** shows in Fig. 15E-15G that the HSQ film is removed in the peripheral area. That is, the insulating layers in the peripheral area are not the same as those of the central area. The aforementioned amendment to claim 1 clarifies the same lamination is used for the interlevel insulating films of the circuit area and the insulating films of the peripheral area.

Thus, the 35 USC §102(e) rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 1 and 21-23, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

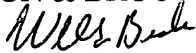
If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/987,012  
Response to Office Action dated November 1, 2004

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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